AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The claims as pending are presented below with deletions indicated by strikethrough or double bracketing. Additions to the claims are marked with underlines.

1.   (Currently Amended) An order optimization system, comprising:

an order processing computer;

a communication device, said communication device being capable of

communicating with an ~~establishment~~ order processing computer, and

transmitting an order to said ~~establishment~~ order processing computer[[,]]; and

said ~~establishment~~ order processing computer ~~having~~ executing software which configures said order processing computer ~~enabled means~~ for

receiving said order from said communication device,

tracking availability of one or more resources used for order fulfillment,

determining an optimized utilization of resources for fulfillment of received orders,

assigning resources to said order in accordance with said optimized utilization, and

~~commanding the~~ initiating fulfillment of said order.

2.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 1, wherein said establishment computer is capable of communicating with a financial institution for electronically processing payments.

3.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 1, further comprising a third party computer, wherein said device communicates with said establishment computer through said third party computer.

4.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 3, wherein said third party computer is capable of communicating with a financial institution for electronically processing payments.

5.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 1, wherein said device communicates with said establishment computer via a network protocol.

6.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 5, wherein said network protocol is a wireless Ethernet network.

7.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 5, wherein said network protocol is a telephone network.

8.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 5, wherein said network protocol is an Internet connected network.

9.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 1, wherein said device is a kiosk comprising a computer, a display, and a means for receiving input.

10.   (Presently Amended)   The order optimization system according to claim 1, wherein said communication device is a telephone.

11. .   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 10, wherein said telephone is a cellular telephone.

12.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 10, wherein said telephone communicates with said establishment computer via an interactive voice response system.

13.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 11, wherein said cellular telephone communicates with said establishment computer via an interactive voice response system.

14.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 1, wherein said device is a personal digital assistant.

15.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 1, wherein said device is a personal computer.

16.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 1, wherein said system comprises means for determining and transmitting information regarding the location of said device.

17.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 16, wherein said means for determining device location comprises a global positioning system.

18.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 16, wherein said means for determining device location comprises a satellite-based radio positioning system.

19. .   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 16, wherein said means for determining device location comprises cellular tower triangulation.

20.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 16, wherein said means for determining device location comprises reading the location of an RF ID tag associated with said device.

21.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 1, wherein said establishment computer further comprises software enabled means for commanding a notification message.

22.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 1, wherein said software enabled means for receiving said order comprises a telephony system, wherein said order is input via keypad selections.

23.   (Currently Amended)   The order optimization system according to claim 1, wherein said software ~~enabled means~~ configures said computer for receiving said order ~~comprises a telephony system, wherein said order is input~~ via audible communication.

24.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 22, wherein
        said means for receiving said order comprises means for identifying the customer placing said order, and
        said telephony system comprises a memory, and software enabled means for querying said memory for said customer's previous order history and order preferences.

25.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 24, wherein said means for identifying the customer placing said order comprises an inputted personal identification number.

26.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 24, wherein said means for identifying the customer placing said order comprises a means for identifying the telephone number being used to access said telephony system.

27.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 24, wherein said means for receiving said order further comprises software enabled means for offering said customer a preferred order.

28.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 24, wherein said means for receiving said order further comprises software enabled means for offering said customer a previously ordered order.

29.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 24, wherein said means for receiving said order further comprises software enabled means for offering said customer a predetermined order associated with said customer.

30.   (Currently Amended) The order optimization system according to claim 1, wherein said ~~means~~ software which configures said computer for receiving said order comprises software ~~enabled mean~~ which configures said computer for displaying a series of hierarchal menus on a visual display.

31.   (Currently Amended) The order optimization system according to claim 1, wherein said ~~means~~ software which configures said computer for assigning resources to said order comprises software ~~enabled mean~~ which configures said computer for determining the availability of at least one limiting resource necessary to fulfill said order.

32.   (Currently Amended) The order optimization system according to claim 31, wherein said ~~means~~ software which configures said computer for determining the availability of at least one limiting resource necessary to fulfill said order comprises software ~~enabled mean~~ which configures said computer for referring to a look-up table comprising information that associates different types of limiting resources with different types of orders.

33.   (Currently Amended) The order optimization system according to claim 3 1, wherein said ~~means~~ software which configures said computer for assigning resources to said order comprises software ~~enabled mean~~ which configures said computer for determining a set of components for said order, and software ~~enabled mean~~ which configures said computer for determining the availability of at least one limiting resource necessary to fulfill each of said order components.

34.   (Currently Amended) The order optimization system according to claim 33, wherein said ~~means~~ software which configures said computer for determining the availability of at least one limiting resource necessary to fulfill said order components comprises software ~~enabled mean~~

<u>which configures said computer</u> for referring to a look-up table comprising information that associates different types of limiting resources with different order components.

35.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 32, wherein said means for assigning resources to said order further comprises software enabled means for matching an order, or component thereof, to a limiting resource.

36.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 35, wherein said means for matching an order, or component thereof, to a limiting resource comprises software enabled optimization rules.

37.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 36, wherein said optimization rules comprise assigning an available resource to an earliest placed order in a set of pending orders.

38.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 36, wherein said optimization rules comprise minimizing idle time for said limiting resources.

39.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 36, wherein said optimization rules comprise maximizing order throughput.

40.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 36, wherein said optimization rules comprise minimizing total customer wait time.

41.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 36, wherein said optimization rules comprise maximizing establishment employee utilization.

42.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 36, wherein said optimization rules comprise maximizing delivery driver utilization.

43.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 36, wherein said optimization rules comprise valuing time as a function of time.

44   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 36, wherein said optimization rules comprise optimizing service to customers having differing service levels.

45.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 1, wherein said means for commanding the fulfillment of said order comprises software enabled means for determining a starting time for preparing each order, or component thereof.

46   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 45, wherein said means for determining a starting time for preparing each order, or component thereof, comprises software enabled means for estimating an arrival time of a customer at an establishment and determining a starting time for preparing each order, or component thereof, such that order completion coincides with said customer's estimated arrival time.

47   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 45, wherein said means for determining a starting time for preparing each order, or component thereof, comprises software enabled means for estimating an arrival time of a delivery driver at an establishment and determining a starting time for preparing each order, or component thereof, such that order completion coincides with said delivery driver's estimated arrival time.

48.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 46, wherein said means for estimating an arrival time of said customer comprises tracking said customer's location.

49.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 48, wherein tracking said customer's location comprises tracking said customer's location, direction, and speed of travel.

50.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 47, wherein said means for estimating an arrival time of said delivery driver comprises tracking said driver's location.

51.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 50, wherein tracking said driver's location comprises tracking said driver's location, direction, and speed of travel.

52.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 46, wherein said means for estimating an arrival time of a customer comprises tracking a vehicle on or in which said customer is traveling.

53.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 52, wherein tracking a vehicle on or in which said customer is traveling comprises tracking said vehicle's location, direction, and speed of travel.

54.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 52, wherein said vehicle is an airplane and said means for estimating an arrival time of said customer comprises estimating a time spent deplaning and traveling from an arrival gate.

55.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 46, where said estimated arrival time is a limiting resource.

56.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 47, where said estimated arrival time is a limiting resource.

57.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 1, wherein said means for commanding the fulfillment of said order comprises software enabled means for determining whether a triggering condition is satisfied.

58.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 57, wherein said triggering condition comprises a customer's arrival at a predetermined location.

59.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 57, wherein said triggering condition comprises a delivery driver's arrival at a predetermined location.

60.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 57, wherein said triggering condition comprises a delivery driver's proximity to a predetermined location.

61.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 57, wherein said means for commanding the fulfillment of said order comprises notifying a customer when a delivery driver is within a predetermined distance from a predetermined location.

62.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 57, wherein commanding the fulfillment of said order comprises changing an ON/OFF state of an electrical device.

63.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 1, wherein said system further comprises software enabled means for confirming the completion of said order.

64.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 63, wherein said means for confirming the completion of said order comprises means for receiving a confirmation notification from a device.

65.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 64, wherein said device is associated with a delivery driver.

66.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 65, wherein said device is a telephone.

67.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 65, wherein said device is a PDA.

68.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 65, wherein said device is to be located at an establishment fulfilling said order.

69.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 1, wherein said system further comprises software enabled means for sending a notification of a request to a device.

70.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 69, wherein said request is a request for confirmation of completion of said order.

71.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 70, wherein said device is associated with a delivery driver.

72.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 71, wherein said device is a telephone.

73.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 71, wherein said device is a PDA.

74.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 71, wherein said device is to be located at an establishment fulfilling said order.

75.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 1, wherein commanding the fulfillment of said order comprises sending a notification to a device of a delivery driver associated with said order.

76.   (original)   The order optimization system according to claim 1, wherein commanding fulfillment of said order comprises sending notification of an assigned, an un-assigned and a re-assigned order, to a delivery driver.

77.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 1, wherein commanding the fulfillment of said order comprises sending a customer a notification upon a delivery of said order.

78.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 57, wherein said triggering condition comprises the time remaining in a sporting event.

79.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 57, wherein said triggering condition comprises a score in a sporting event.

80.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 57, wherein said triggering condition comprises an event in a sporting event.

81.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 57, wherein said triggering condition comprises completion of the preparation of all of the meals for a delivery driver's delivery run.

82.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 57, wherein said triggering condition comprises a time remaining in a televised event.

83.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 57, wherein said triggering condition comprises a time remaining in a live event.

84.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 78, wherein said time remaining in a sporting event is determined from a plurality of game specific and historical game data.

85.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 21, wherein said notification message comprises a telephone call to a designated telephone number.

86.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 21, wherein said notification message comprises a telephone page to a designated pager.

87.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 21, wherein said notification message comprises an e-mail message to a designated e-mail address .

88.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 21, wherein said notification message comprises an instant message to a designated computer address.

89.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 21, wherein said notification message comprises a print out.

90.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 21, wherein said notification message comprises sounding an alarm on a personal digital assistant.

91.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 21, wherein said notification message comprises vibration on a personal digital assistant.

92.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 21, wherein said notification message comprises a visual display.

93.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 21, wherein said software enabled means for commanding a notification message comprises a notification database, wherein a specific notification means can be stored for a specific customer.

94.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 21, wherein said software enabled means for commanding a notification message comprises a notification database, wherein a specific notification means can be stored for a specific establishment employee.

95.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 21, wherein said software enabled means for commanding a notification message comprises a notification database, wherein a specific notification means can be stored for establishment employees based on job function.

96.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 21, wherein said software enabled means for commanding a notification message comprises means for determining when a specific notification message should be sent.

97.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 21, wherein said software enabled means for commanding a notification message comprises means for determining a customer's distance from a specified location and commanding said notification message based on an expected travel time to said specified location.

98.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 1, further comprising software enabled means for limiting the usage of a limiting resource.

99.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 98, wherein said software enabled means for limiting the usage of a limiting resource comprises charging a customer for the use of said limiting resource.

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100.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 99, wherein said customer is charged based on an amount of time said customer uses said limiting resource.

101.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 100, wherein said amount of time is determined from manual entry of a start time and a stop time.

102.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 100, wherein said amount of time is determined from sensors activated by the use of said limiting resource.

103.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 100, further comprising means for displaying said amount of time to said customer.

104.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 100, further comprising means for electronically preparing said customer's bill.

105.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 1, further comprising means for tracking implements used to prepare said order.

106.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 105, wherein said means for tracking implements used to prepare said order comprises:

          means for establishing a unique identifier for each implement,

          means for reading said unique identifiers, and

          means for associating an implement with said order.

107.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 106, wherein said means for establishing a unique identifier for each implement, means for reading said unique identifiers, and means for associating an implement with said order comprises RF ID tags and RF ID detectors.

108.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 106, wherein said means for establishing a unique identifier for each implement, means for reading said unique identifiers, and means for associating an implement with said order comprises Bluetooth transmitters and receivers.

109.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 106, wherein said means for establishing a unique identifier for each implement, means for reading said unique identifiers, and means for associating an implement with said order comprises wireless Ethernet transmitters and receivers.

110.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 106, wherein said means for tracking implements used to prepare said order further comprises software enabled means for evaluating the order fulfillment process.

111.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 106, wherein said means for tracking implements used to prepare said order further comprises means to track a customer's use of said implements.

112.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 106, wherein said means for tracking implements used to prepare said order further comprises means for displaying an order fulfillment status.

113.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 112, wherein said means for tracking implements used to prepare said order further comprises:
       means for displaying available order change options, and
       means for allowing said customer to change said order.

114.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 1, wherein said order is intended for delivery to a customer, said system further comprising:

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means for tracking the location of at least one delivery person,

means for predicting when a delivery person will be available to pick up said

order, and

means for assigning said order to a delivery person.

115. (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 114, wherein said system further comprises means for scheduling completion of said order to coincide with a delivery person's availability.

116. (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 114, wherein said system further comprises means for notifying said delivery person of assignments.

117. (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 116, wherein said system further comprises means for notifying said delivery person of delivery instructions.

118. (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 114, wherein system further comprises means for monitoring the safety of a delivery person.

119. (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 114, wherein a plurality of delivery persons are organized into a virtual delivery team for a plurality of establishments.

120. (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 114, wherein a plurality of supplemental delivery persons in a hybrid delivery team are used in addition to a plurality of regular delivery persons.

121. (withdrawn)   The order optimization system according to claim 120 where in said plurality of supplemental delivery persons comprise taxi-cab drivers.

122.   (Currently Amended)   An order optimization method, comprising:

tracking availability of one or more resources used for order fulfillment,

communicating an order from a communication device to an ~~establishment~~ order processing

computer,

receiving said order,

determining an optimized utilization of resources for fulfillment of received orders,

assigning resources to said order in accordance with said optimized utilization, and

~~commanding the~~ initiating fulfillment of said order.

123.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 122, further comprising

communicating with a financial institution and processing payment electronically.

124.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 122, wherein said device

communicates with said establishment computer via a network protocol.

125.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 124, wherein said

network protocol is a wireless Ethernet network.

126.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 124, wherein said

network protocol is a telephone network.

127.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 124, wherein said

network protocol is an Internet connected network.

128.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 122, wherein said device

is a kiosk comprising a computer, a display, and a means for receiving input.

129.   (Currently Amended)   The order optimization method according to claim 122, wherein said

communication device is a telephone.

130.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 129, wherein said telephone is a cellular telephone.

131.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 129, wherein said telephone communicates with said establishment computer via an interactive voice response system.

132.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 130, wherein said cellular telephone communicates with said establishment computer via an interactive voice response system.

133.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 122, wherein said device is a personal digital assistant.

134.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 122, wherein said device is a personal computer.

135.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 122, wherein said method further comprises determining and transmitting information regarding the location of said device.

136.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 135, wherein determining device location comprises tracking said device via a global positioning system.

137.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 135, wherein said determining device location comprises tracking said device via a satellite-based radio positioning system.

138.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 135, wherein said determining device location comprises tracking said device via cellular tower triangulation.

139.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 135, wherein said determining device location comprises reading the location of an RF ID tag associated with said device.

140.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 135, wherein said method further comprises commanding a notification message.

141.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 122, wherein receiving said order comprises using a telephony system, wherein said order is input via keypad selections.

142.   (Currently Amended)   The order optimization method according to claim 122, wherein receiving said order comprises receiving ~~using a telephony system, wherein~~ said order ~~is input~~ via audible communication.

143.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 141, wherein receiving said order comprises identifying a customer placing said order, and said telephony system comprises a memory, and software enabled means for querying said memory for said customer's previous order history and order preferences.

144.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 143, wherein identifying a customer placing said order comprises an inputted personal identification number.

145.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 143, wherein identifying a customer placing said order comprises identifying the telephone number being used to access said telephony system.

146.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 143, wherein receiving said order further comprises offering said customer a preferred order.

147. (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 143, wherein receiving said order further comprises offering said customer a previously ordered order.

148. (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 143, wherein receiving said order further comprises offering said customer a predetermined order associated with said customer.

149. (original)   The order optimization method according to claim 122, wherein receiving said order comprises displaying a series of hierarchal menus on a visual display.

150. (original)   The order optimization method according to claim 122, wherein assigning resources to said order comprises determining the availability of at least one limiting resource necessary to fulfill said order.

151. (original)   The order optimization method according to claim 150, wherein determining the availability of at least one limiting resource necessary to fulfill said order comprises referring to a look-up table comprising information that associates different types of limiting resources with different types of orders.

152. (original)   The order optimization method according to claim 150, wherein assigning resources to said order comprises determining a set of components for said order, and determining the availability of at least one limiting resource necessary to fulfill each of said order components.

153. (original)   The order optimization method according to claim 152, wherein determining the availability of at least one limiting resource necessary to fulfill said order components comprises referring to a look-up table comprising information that associates different types of limiting resources with different order components.

154.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 151, wherein s assigning
resources to said order further comprises matching an order, or component thereof, to a limiting
resource.

155.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 154, wherein matching an
order, or component thereof, to a limiting resource comprises matching an order, or component
thereof, to a limiting resource according to optimization
rules.

156.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 155, wherein said
optimization rules comprise assigning an available resource to an earliest placed order in a set of
pending orders.

157.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 155, wherein said
optimization rules comprise minimizing idle time for said limiting resources.

158.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 155, wherein said
optimization rules comprise maximizing order throughput.

159.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 155, wherein said
optimization rules comprise minimizing total customer wait time.

160.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 155, wherein said
optimization rules comprise maximizing establishment employee
utilization.

161.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 155, wherein said
optimization rules comprise maximizing delivery driver utilization.

162.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 155, wherein said optimization rules comprise valuing time as a function of time.

163.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 155, wherein said optimization rules comprise optimizing service to customers having differing service levels.

164.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 122, wherein commanding the fulfillment of said order comprises determining a starting time for preparing each order, or component thereof.

165.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 164, wherein determining a starting time for preparing each order, or component thereof, comprises estimating an arrival time of a customer at an establishment and determining a starting time for preparing each order, or component thereof, such that order completion coincides with said customer's estimated arrival time.

166.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 164, wherein determining a starting time for preparing each order, or component thereof, comprises estimating an arrival time of a delivery driver at an establishment and determining a starting time for preparing each order, or component thereof, such that order completion coincides with said driver's estimated arrival time.

167.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 166, wherein estimating an arrival time of said customer comprises tracking said customer's location.

168.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 166, wherein estimating an arrival time of said customer comprises tracking said customer's location, direction, and speed of travel.

169.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 166, wherein estimating an arrival time of said delivery driver comprises tracking said delivery driver's location.

170.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 166, wherein estimating an arrival time of said delivery driver comprises tracking said driver's location, direction, and speed of travel.

171.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 166, wherein estimating an arrival time of said customer comprises tracking a vehicle on or in which said customer is traveling.

172.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 17 1, wherein tracking a vehicle on or in which said customer is traveling comprises tracking said vehicle's location, direction, and speed of travel.

173.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 171, wherein said vehicle is an airplane and estimating an arrival time of said customer comprises estimating the time spent deplaning and traveling from an arrival gate.

174.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 166, wherein estimated arrival time is a limiting resource.

175.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 169, wherein estimated arrival time is a limiting resource.

176.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 122, wherein commanding the fulfillment of said order comprises determining whether a triggering condition is satisfied.

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177.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 176, wherein said triggering condition comprises a customer's arrival at a predetermined location.

178.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 176, wherein said triggering condition comprises a delivery driver's arrival at a predetermined location.

179.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 176, wherein said triggering condition comprises a delivery driver's proximity to a predetermined location.

180.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 176, wherein commanding the fulfillment of said order comprises notifying the customer when the delivery driver is within a predetermined distance from a predetermined location.

181.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 176, wherein commanding the fulfillment of said order comprises changing an ONIOFF state of an electrical device.

182.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 122 wherein commanding the fulfillment of said order comprises sending notification to a device of a delivery driver associated with said order.

183.   (original)   The order optimization method according to claim 122, wherein commanding the fulfillment of said order comprises maximizing the productivity of a delivery driver associated with said order.

184.   (original)   The order optimization system according to claim 183, wherein maximizing the productivity of a delivery driver associated with said order comprises sending notification of an assigned, an un-assigned and a re-assigned order, to a device of said delivery driver.

185. (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 122, wherein commanding the fulfillment of said order comprises sending a customer a notification upon delivery of said order.

186. (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 176, wherein said triggering condition comprises a time remaining in a sporting event.

187. (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 176, wherein said triggering condition comprises a score in a sporting event.

188. (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 176, wherein said triggering condition comprises an event in a sporting event.

189. (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 176, wherein said triggering condition comprises a completion of the preparation of all of the meals assigned to a particular delivery driver's delivery run.

190. (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 176, wherein said triggering condition comprises a time remaining in a televised event.

191. (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 176, wherein said triggering condition comprises a time remaining in a live event.

192. (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 186, wherein said time remaining in a sporting event is determined from a plurality of game specific and historical game data.

193. (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 140, wherein said notification message comprises a telephone call to a designated telephone number.

194.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 140, wherein said notification message comprises a telephone page to a designated pager.

195.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 140, wherein said notification message comprises an e-mail message to a designated email address.

196.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 140, wherein said notification message comprises an instant message to a designated computer address.

197.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 140, wherein said notification message comprises a print out.

198.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 140, wherein said notification message comprises sounding an alarm on a personal digital assistant.

199.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 140, wherein said notification message comprises vibration on a personal digital assistant.

200.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 140, wherein said notification message comprises a visual display.

201.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 140, wherein commanding a notification message comprises referencing a notification database, wherein a specific notification method can be stored for a specific customer.

202.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 140, wherein said commanding a notification message comprises referencing a notification database, wherein a specific notification method can be stored for a specific establishment employee.

203.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 140, wherein commanding a notification message comprises referencing a notification database, wherein a specific notification method can be stored for establishment employees based on job function.

204.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 140, wherein commanding a notification message comprises determining when a specific notification message should be sent.

205.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 140, wherein commanding a notification message comprises determining a customer's distance from a specified location and commanding said notification message based on an expected travel time to said specified location.

206.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 122, further comprising limiting the usage of a limiting resource.

207.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 206, wherein said limiting the usage of a limiting resource comprises charging a customer for the use of said limiting resource.

208.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 207, wherein charging a customer for the use of said limiting resource comprises determining an amount of time said customer uses said limiting resource and charging said customer based on said amount of time said customer uses said limiting resource.

209.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 208, wherein determining said amount of time comprises entering manually a start time and a stop time.

210.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 208, wherein said determining said amount of time comprises sensing the use of said limiting resource.

211.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 208, further comprising displaying said amount of time to said customer.

212.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 122, further comprising tracking implements used to prepare said order.

213.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 212, wherein said tracking implements used to prepare said order comprises:

        establishing a unique identifier for each implement,

        reading said unique identifiers, and

        associating an implement with said order.

214.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 213, wherein tracking implements used to prepare said order further comprises evaluating the order fulfillment process.

215.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 213, wherein tracking implements used to prepare said order further comprises tracking a customer's use of said implements.

216.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 213, wherein tracking implements used to prepare said order further comprises displaying an order fulfillment status.

217.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 216, wherein tracking implements used to prepare said order further comprises:

        displaying available order change options, and

        allowing said customer to change said order.

218.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 216, wherein said order is intended for delivery to a customer, said method further comprising:

       tracking the location of at least one delivery person,

       predicting the when a delivery person will be available to pick up said order, and

       assigning said order to a delivery person.

219.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 218, wherein said system further comprises means for scheduling completion of said order to coincide with a delivery person's availability.

220.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 218, wherein said method further comprises notifying said delivery person of assignments.

221.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 220, wherein said method further comprises notifying said delivery person of delivery instructions.

222.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 218, wherein system further comprises monitoring the safety of a delivery person.

223.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 218, wherein a plurality of delivery persons are organized into a virtual delivery team for a plurality of establishments

224.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 218, wherein a plurality of supplemental delivery persons in a hybrid delivery team are used in addition to a plurality of regular delivery persons.

225.   (withdrawn)   The order optimization method according to claim 224 wherein said plurality of supplemental delivery persons comprise taxi-cab drivers.

226. (New)   The order optimization system according to claim 1 wherein the order processing computer further executes software which configures said order processing computer for predicting future availability of resources.

227. (New)   The order optimization system according to claim 1 wherein the order processing computer further executes software which configures said order processing computer for tracking a processing status of said order.

228. (New)   The order optimization system according to claim 1 wherein the order processing computer further executes software which configures said order processing computer for determining a priority value of said order.

229. (New)   The order optimization system according to claim 228 wherein the order processing computer further executes software which configures said order processing computer for adjusting the priority value of said order.

230. (New)   The order optimization system according to claims 1, 228 or 229 wherein the order processing computer further executes software which configures said order processing computer for halting fulfillment of said order.

231. (New)   The order optimization method of claim 122 further comprising predicting future availability of resources.

232. (New)   The order optimization method of claim 122 further comprising tracking a processing status of said order.

233. (New)   The order optimization method of claim 122 further comprising determining a priority value of said order.

234.   (New)   The order optimization method of claim 233 further comprising adjusting the priority value of said order.

235.   (New)   The order optimization method of claim 122, 233 or 234 further comprising halting fulfillment of said order.

236.   (New)   An article of manufacture for use in managing order processing, the article comprising a computer readable medium comprising instructions which, when executed on a suitable processor, will cause said processor to perform the operations of:

    tracking resources for completing orders;

    receiving at least one order;

    determining availability of resources for completing said at least one order;

    optimizing processing of said at least one order based on at least the availability of at least one resource; and

    initiating processing of said at least one order.

237.   (New)   The article of claim 236 wherein the computer readable medium further comprises instructions which, when executed, predict future availability of at least one resource for completing orders.

238.   (New)   The article of claim 236 wherein the computer readable medium further comprises instructions which, when executed, predict future availability of at least one resource for completing said order.

239.   (New)   The article of claim 236 wherein the optimizing further comprises optimizing allocation of resources to processing said at least one order.

240.   (New)   The article of claim 236 wherein the computer readable medium further comprises instructions which, when executed, track processing status of said at least one order.

241.   (New)   The article of claim 236 wherein the computer readable medium further comprises instructions which, when executed, determine a priority value of said at least one order relative to one or more other received orders.

242.   (New)   The article of claim 236 wherein the computer readable medium further comprises instructions which, when executed, adjust the priority value of said at least one order.

243.   (New)   The article of claim 236, 241 or 242 wherein the computer readable medium further comprises instructions which, when executed, halt fulfillment of said at least one order.

244.   (New)   The article of claim 236 wherein the computer readable medium further comprises instructions which, when executed, adjust resources allocated to said at least one order after processing of said at least one order has commenced.

245.   (New)   The article of claim 236 wherein the computer readable medium further comprises instructions which, when executed, adjust resources allocated to an order different from said at least one order after processing of said at least one order has commenced.

246.   (New)   A computer-assisted method for managing order processing, wherein at least one portion of the method is performed with the assistance of a computer, the method comprising:

    receiving orders;

    determining availability of resources for completion of orders;

    estimating future availability of resources for completion of orders;

    optimizing matching of a subset of the received orders with resources that are either available, or estimated to be available in the future; and

    initiating processing of orders based on the optimizing.